AMENDMENT

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the

application:

Listing of Claims:

1.   (Currently Amended) A method of creating an animated entity for delivering a multi-

media message from a sender to a recipient, the method comprising:

receiving from the sender an image file to a server, the image file having associated

sender-assigned name, gender, category and indexing information;

presenting to the sender the image file and a choice of a generic face model template

from a plurality of generic face model templates;

after the sender chooses a generic face model template, presenting the image file and the

selected model template to the sender and requesting the sender to mark features on the image

file;

defining, by the sender, a symmetry axis for a face appearing in the presented image file,

such that a rotation of the face is defined in an image plane by computing an angle between

image boundaries and an imaginary line defined by a point at a chin, a point at a nose tip, and a

point at a top of a head of the face appearing in the presented image file;

after the sender marks the image file, presenting to the sender a preview of at least one

expression associated with the marked image file;

if the sender does not accept the image file after the preview, presenting again the image

file and selected model template for the sender to redo or add marked features on the image file;

if the sender accepts the image file after the preview, presenting the image file as an

optional animated entity when the sender chooses an animated entity to deliver a multi-media

message[[;]] .

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2.   (Previously Presented) The method of creating an animated entity of claim 1, wherein the indexing information relates to enabling the animated entity to be in a searchable database.

3.   (Previously Presented) The method of creating an animated entity of claim 1, wherein the gender information relates to a default gender of a voice associated with the animated entity.

4.   (Original) The method of creating an animated entity of claim 1, wherein presenting the image file and the selected model template to the sender and requesting the sender to mark features on the image file further comprises instructing the sender to mark points on the image file by indicating a corresponding point on the selected model template.

5.   (Original) The method of creating an animated entity of claim 4, further comprising presenting the image file and the selected model template to the sender and instructing the sender to mark points on the image file corresponding to highlighted points on the selected model template until a threshold number of points on the image file have been marked by the sender.

6.   (Previously presented) The method of creating an animated entity of claim 5, further comprising:

        after reaching the threshold number of points on the image file, presenting the sender an option to mark additional points;

        if the sender chooses to mark additional points, presenting the image file and the selected model template to the sender and instructing the sender to mark additional points on the image

file corresponding to highlighted points on the selected model template until a maximum number

of points on the image file have been marked by the sender; and

if the sender chooses not to mark additional points, continuing presenting a preview of

the image file.

7.   (Original) The method of creating an animated entity of claim 1, further comprising:

presenting the sender with an option to choose textures for teeth, eyes and a tongue.

8.   (Original) The method of creating an animated entity of claim 7, wherein after the sender

chooses textures for teeth, eyes and the tongue, the chosen textures are added to the image file

for use in the animated entity.

9.   (Original) The method of creating an animated entity of claim 1, further comprising

presenting the sender with an option to choose different teeth from a group of teeth for the

animated entity.

10.   (Original) The method of creating an animated entity of claim 1, further comprising:

presenting the sender with an option to choose aging effects associated with the animated

entity; and

using the chosen aging effect, modifying the image file to increase or decrease the

appearance of the age of the image file according to the option chosen by the sender.

11.   (Previously Presented) The method of creating an animated entity of claim 1, further

comprising:

presenting the sender with an option to modify an appearance of weight of the animated

entity; and

modifying the image file to increase or decrease the appearance of the weight of the

animated entity according to the option chosen by the sender.

12. (Currently amended) A method of enabling a sender to create an animated entity for

delivering a multi-media message from the sender to a recipient, the animated entity arranged to

deliver a text message from the sender, the method comprising:

receiving from the sender an image file at a server;

presenting to the sender the image file and at least one generic face model template with

an option to choose one of the at least one generic face model template to assist in marking the

image file; and

after the sender selects one of the at least one generic face model template, presenting the

image file and the selected model template to the sender and requesting the sender to mark

features on the image file associated with features on the selected model template highlighted in

succession;

defining, by the sender, a symmetry axis for a face appearing in the presented image file,

such that a rotation of the face is defined in an image plane by computing an angle between

image boundaries and an imaginary line defined by a point at a chin, a point at a nose tip, and a

point at a top of a head of the face appearing in the presented image file[[;]].

13. (Previously Presented) The method of enabling a sender to create an animated entity for

delivering a multi-media message from the sender to a recipient of claim 12, further comprising:

after the sender marks the image file, presenting to the sender a preview of at least one

expression associated with the marked image file;

if the sender does not accept the image file after the preview, presenting again the image

file and selected model template for the sender to redo or add marked features on the image file;

and

if the sender accepts the image file after the preview, presenting the image file as an

optional animated entity when the sender chooses an animated entity to deliver a multi-media

message.

14.   (Original) The method of enabling a sender to create an animated entity for delivering a

multi-media message from the sender to a recipient of claim 12, further comprising:

presenting the sender with options to modify a texture of teeth, eyes and/or tongue.

15.   (Original) The method of enabling a sender to create an animated entity for delivering a

multi-media message from the sender to a recipient of claim 12, further comprising:

presenting the sender with options to modify a parameter associated with the appearance

of weight for the image file.

16-19. (Canceled)

20.   (Previously presented) A method of enabling sender customization of an animated entity

for use in delivering a multi-media message, the method comprising, over a network:

receiving from a sender an image of an entity to be used as the animated entity;

requesting the sender to mark a plurality of facial features on the entity and receiving the

facial features marked by the sender, the receiving of the facial features marked by the sender

further comprising:

defining, by the sender, a symmetry axis for a face of the entity, such that a

rotation of the face is defined in an image plane by computing an angle between image

boundaries and an imaginary line defined by a point at a chin, a point at a nose tip, and a

point at a top of a head of the face of the entity;

computing a customized model associated with the entity; and

storing the customized model in a private database for restricted access by the

sender.

21.   (Previously Presented) The method of enabling sender customization of an animated

entity for use in delivering a multi-media message of claim 20, the method further comprising:

after computing the customized model associated with the entity, displaying at least one

facial expression to the sender of the customized model.

22.   (Original) The method of enabling sender customization of an animated entity for use in

delivering a multi-media message of claim 21, the method further comprising:

after displaying at least one facial expression to the sender of the customized model,

presenting the sender with an option to change a magnitude associated with each displayed facial

expression.

23.   (Original) The method of enabling sender customization of an animated entity for use in

delivering a multi-media message of claim 20, wherein requesting the sender to mark a plurality

of facial features on the entity further comprises requesting the sender to mark facial features

associated with eye corners, eye lids, nose, mouth corners, lip boundaries, and hair outline.

24.   (Previously presented) A method of enabling sender customization, over a network, of

an animated entity used for delivering a multi-media message, the method comprising:

        receiving from a sender, via the network, an image of an entity to be used as the animated

entity;

        requesting the sender to mark a plurality of facial features on the entity and in response,

receiving facial features marked by the sender, the receiving of the facial features marked by the

sender further comprising:

            defining, by the sender, a symmetry axis for a face of the entity, such that a

        rotation of the face is defined in an image plane by computing an angle between image

        boundaries and an imaginary line defined by a point at a chin, a point at a nose tip, and a

        point at a top of a head of the face of the entity;

        computing a customized model associated with the entity;

        presenting a proof-animated entity to the sender based on the customized model; and

        if approved by the sender, storing the customized model in a private database for

restricted access by the sender.

25-26. (Canceled)

27.   (Previously presented) A method of creating an animated entity for delivering a multi-

media message from a remote sender to a recipient, the method comprising:

        receiving from the remote sender an image file;

presenting the sender an option to zoom the image file;

if the sender selects to zoom the image file, presenting the sender with a zoomed image

file;

requesting the sender to mark features on the image file in preparation for creating an

animated entity from the image file;

defining, by the sender, a symmetry axis for a face appearing in the presented image file,

such that a rotation of the face is defined in an image plane by computing an angle between

image boundaries and an imaginary line defined by a point at a chin, a point at a nose tip, and a

point at a top of a head of the face appearing in the presented image file; and

presenting the image file as an optional animated entity when the sender chooses an

animated entity to deliver a multi-media message.

28.   (Previously Presented) The method of creating an animated entity for delivering a multi-

media message from a sender to a recipient of claim 27, wherein presenting the image file as an

optional animated entity further comprises presenting the sender with the following background

choices for the selected animated entity:

(1) a predefined background, wherein the animated entity is automatically scaled to fill a

frame of a window in which it is presented;

(2) a background associated with the received image file, wherein the animated entity has

a same size as in the image file; and

(3) if the sender selects to zoom the image file, the zoomed image file includes the

background, wherein the animated entity is presented with a size as given in the zoomed image

file.

29.   (Canceled)

30.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 27, further comprising presenting the sender with an option to select a predefined background, wherein the personal animated entity is automatically scaled to fill a window in which it is presented.

31.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 27, wherein `presenting the selectable personal animated entity further comprises presenting the sender with an option to select a background associated with the received image file, wherein the animated entity has the same size as in the image file.

32.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 27, further comprising presenting the sender with an option, if the sender selected to zoom the image file, to choose the zoomed image file as the background, wherein the animated entity is presented with the size as given in the zoomed image file.

33.   (Previously presented) An apparatus comprising:

    means for receiving from a sender, via a network, an image file;

    means for providing the sender an option to zoom the image file;

    means for presenting the sender with a zoomed image file;

    means for requesting the sender to mark features on the image file in preparation for creating an animated entity from the image file;

    means for defining a symmetry axis for a face appearing in the presented image file, such that a rotation of the face is defined in an image plane by computing an angle between image

boundaries and an imaginary line defined by a point at a chin, a point at a nose tip, and a point at

a top of a head of the face appearing in the presented image file; and

means for presenting the image file as an optional animated entity when the sender

chooses an animated entity to deliver a multi-media message.